

justice and equality, and who love this country will be treated better, will be recognized, and certainly will be given their correct place in history.

So I urge Members to celebrate the memory of these brave men of the 369th Infantry Regiment, who, through their service, sought to realize a more equal and a more perfect union, by voting "yes" on H.R. 3642.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3642, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

DEBT BONDAGE REPAIR ACT

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2332) to prohibit consumer reporting agencies from furnishing a consumer report containing any adverse item of information about a consumer if such consumer is a victim of trafficking, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2332

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Debt Bondage Repair Act".

SEC. 2. ADVERSE INFORMATION IN CASES OF TRAFFICKING.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 605B the following:

"§605C Adverse information in cases of trafficking

"(a) IN GENERAL.—A consumer reporting agency may not furnish a consumer report containing any adverse item of information about a consumer that resulted from a severe form of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking if the consumer has provided trafficking documentation to the consumer reporting agency.

"(b) RULEMAKING.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, issue a rule to implement subsection (a).

"(2) CONTENTS.—The rule issued pursuant to paragraph (1) shall establish a method by which consumers shall submit trafficking documentation to consumer reporting agencies.

"(c) DEFINITIONS.—

"(1) TRAFFICKING DOCUMENTATION.—The term trafficking documentation means—

"(A) documentation of either—

"(i) a determination by a Federal or State government entity that a consumer is a victim of trafficking; or

"(ii) a determination by a court of competent jurisdiction that a consumer is a victim of trafficking; and

"(B) documentation that identifies items of adverse information that should not be furnished by a consumer reporting agency because the items resulted from the severe form of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking of which such consumer is a victim.

"(2) VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING.—For the purposes of this section, the term "victim of trafficking" means a person who is a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking, as such terms are defined in section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000."

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS AMENDMENT.—The table of contents of the Fair Credit Reporting Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 605B the following new item:

"605C. Adverse information in cases of trafficking."

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply on the date that is 30 days after the date on which the Director of the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection issues a rule pursuant to section 605C(b) of the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

(d) DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.—The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled "Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation" for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the Committee on Financial Services ranking member, Mr. MCHENRY, for introducing H.R. 2332, the Debt Bondage Repair Act.

Over the last year, working in a bipartisan manner, the Financial Services Committee has been engaged in an examination of trafficking issues of all types. As we heard at a recent hearing that delved into issues of human trafficking, which includes forced labor, sex trafficking and organ trafficking, victims of trafficking are not only abused physically and emotionally, but financially also.

The moving testimony of Reverend Dr. Martin Hatcher, an advocate for sex trafficking survivors and a survivor himself, demonstrated how traffickers

steal their victims' identities, open accounts in their names, run up credit card debt, purchase large ticket items like automobiles, and take out loans while pretending to be their victims.

This financial exploitation is not only designed as a stream of finance, allowing the traffickers' operation to thrive, but it also inflicts long-term harm and asserts control over the victim.

This bill, which aims to help survivors of human trafficking restore their credit and gain access to the consumer financial products and services that most of us take for granted, is an important step in restoring survivors' dignity and financial stability and in preventing revictimization.

Specifically, the bill prohibits credit bureaus from including adverse information that resulted from human or sex trafficking in a victim's credit report. It directs the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to develop a process to ensure that adverse information caused by their traffickers is not included in a victim's credit report. Such a process does not exist now and, given the importance that credit reports play in our economy, it makes it difficult for survivors in our communities to get a loan or even secure a job.

As noted by the Survivor Inclusion Initiative of the Human Trafficking Focus Liechtenstein Initiative, we must "facilitate survivor access to basic banking services, such as checking and savings accounts, and help survivors' financial recovery to become full financial participants in their communities."

Madam Speaker, for these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this important bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1530

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2332, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, debt bondage is a terrible crime, and many victims find themselves trapped in a perpetual cycle of forced labor and coerced debt because of it.

Earlier this year, the House Financial Services Committee held a hearing where we focused on the financing of human trafficking. This is an area of bipartisan cooperation on the House Financial Services Committee. I want to commend my Democrat colleagues for leading this discussion and finding time on the committee docket for us to continue the conversation we have had over the last couple of Congresses.

In that hearing, we heard from many powerful witnesses, including Rev. Dr. Marian Hatcher, who is a trafficking survivor. Rev. Dr. Hatcher had the courage to tell us her story, and because of it, we now have legislation that will help others.

This is the way Congress is supposed to work. We are supposed to listen to experts and get ideas out of that on how we can construct legislation. Because of Dr. Hatcher, we know a lot more.

Dr. Hatcher, like so many others in this country and around the globe, but in this country, in particular, fell victim to human traffickers. Thankfully, she was able to escape a terrible situation and restore her life.

However, she struggled to reestablish herself because of a credit score, which was negatively affecting her whole financial life. She was affected by loans in particular that she was forced to obtain on behalf of her traffickers.

So not only does she have to go through the emotional and social struggles, but she has this that is a weight around her. This is something where we can legislate and make her life and make the lives of trafficking survivors like hers better.

You see, Madam Speaker, this is where traffickers trap a victim into a debt cycle. Traffickers will take out loans, open businesses, and destroy a victim's credit, which forces them to remain a victim until they pay off the debt.

Now, you think this happens in other places around the globe. You think that this is some other country. No, it is here. It is here in our midst, and they are doing it through what seems like legal means.

Too often, these victims are never able to get out. This is something that we have to be aware of and focus on.

That is where this bill, the Debt Bondage Repair Act, comes in. This simple, 4-page bill has the potential to help thousands of victims every year by ensuring that a consumer reporting agency may not furnish a credit report with adverse information from a severe form of trafficking.

While this does not erase the terrible crimes committed against them, it will help victims to regain their financial freedom and begin to rebuild their lives.

I would like to note that this bill has a very tailored rulemaking provision.

We want to fix this problem. We provide the CFPB a window of 180 days for rulemaking. This should be sufficient time to hear from all the stakeholders. But it is my hope that they will complete this rulemaking quickly so that the victims can get relief as soon as possible.

I would like to thank the many victim advocates and consumer data industry representatives who provided technical assistance to get this bill where it is.

I would say the difficulty of legislating is that you have to take in folks who are on opposite sides of an issue. Not that they don't care about the same issue, but you have folks that are on one side of a business and those advocates that see things differently. It takes time to bring them together to see what is a workable solution, maybe not a perfect solution, but a workable solution.

I include in the RECORD statements of support from Shared Hope International, the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, Rev. Dr. Hatcher her-

self, and the Consumer Data Industry Association.

SHAREDHOPE INTERNATIONAL,

June 11, 2021.

Letter of Support for the Debt Bondage Repair Act.

DEAR RANKING MEMBER MCHENRY AND CONGRESSMEMBERS WAGNER, GONZALEZ, TAYLOR, AND HILL: Traffickers financially benefit from exploiting human trafficking victims through forced labor and commercial sex, but also by exploiting their victims' credit history. With credit cards, loan applications, and access to financial services all dependent on an individual's credit history, the impact of this financial exploitation is both far reaching and long-term.

We thank you for taking an important step in addressing these harms by introducing and sponsoring HR 2332, the Debt Bondage Repair Act (DBRA). The DBRA supports trafficking survivors by preventing consumer reporting agencies from issuing credit reports containing adverse information that resulted from a survivor's victimization. This legislation is essential to address the long-term impact of human trafficking by eliminating adverse credit history that would otherwise remain on a survivor's credit report. Most importantly, the DBRA provides survivors an opportunity for financial independence and stability that can help end the cycle of exploitation.

Good credit history is essential for opening bank accounts, and applying for loans, credit cards, insurance, and housing. Credit reports are also sometimes necessary for applying for student loans, and utility and cellphone service contracts. Individuals with adverse credit history and low credit scores experience higher interest rates or denial altogether.

Traffickers use coercion and control to financially exploit their victims in various ways. One survivor described her trafficker coercing her into obtaining a loan and then credit cards by threatening the survivor's family. This left the survivor with poor credit and more than \$25,000 in debt. Traffickers may also try to access credit that has not yet been exploited by intentionally targeting younger victims. One survivor recalled a trafficker targeting seventeen-year-old girls, who were about to turn eighteen because the trafficker could exploit their fresh credit by having them sign up for credit cards. In addition, as Rev. Dr. Marian Hatcher powerfully recounted in her testimony to the House Committee on Financial Services, traffickers may also use their victim's credit to purchase expensive items, such as cars. Traffickers also control their victim's bank accounts, passwords, and use the victim's accounts to engage in criminal activities. Consequently, financial institutions may later deny the survivor services because of criminal activity. Traffickers often exploit their victim's credit history at a time when the victim is not present in the formal economy and unable to build positive credit history.

Trafficking survivors then experience adverse credit history and burdensome loan obligations because of their financial exploitation. Consequently, when survivors leave their trafficking situations, they often cannot access financial resources. Trafficking survivors report difficulty opening bank accounts and obtaining safe housing, employment, cars, and cell phones. Access to housing is especially important to ending the cycle of vulnerability and exploitation. In one study, 64% of trafficking victims reported that lack of affordable housing prevented them from escaping their trafficking situation. Lack of resources may result in survivors returning to their exploitative circumstances. In her testimony to the House

Committee on Financial Services, Rev. Dr. Marian Hatcher testified that lack of resources leads to reexploitation because "survivors feel they have no option other than returning to the commercial sex industry." Also, obstacles to accessing financial resources and student loans may also hinder a survivor's educational aspirations. This negatively impacts the survivor's academic empowerment and long-term goals. Furthermore, survivors may feel stigmatized or embarrassed because of their poor credit. By preventing a consumer reporting agency from reporting adverse information resulting from a survivor's trafficking, the DBRA prevents a survivor's credit report from becoming an apparatus for continuing victimization.

Poor credit due to financial exploitation has long-term impacts on a survivor's ability to access financial resources, build financial independence, and navigate life after exploitation. The Debt Bondage Repair Act is crucial to providing trafficking survivors a clean slate and path toward financial independence. We support this critical legislation and urge Congress to support trafficking survivors by passing the Debt Bondage Repair Act.

Sincerely,

CHRISTINE RAINO,
Senior Director of Public Policy,
Shared Hope International.

NCSE LETTER OF SUPPORT

The National Center on Sexual Exploitation is grateful to Rep. Patrick McHenry for introducing HR 2332, the Debt Bondage Repair Act (DBRA) and to Survivor Leader Marian Hatcher, whose testimony before the Financial Services Committee inspired this solution.

H.R. 2332 provides financial relief to victims of human trafficking by preventing adverse credit reporting of incidents which occurred while being trafficked. The ability to move forward in life after tremendous adversity requires financial well-being along with personal well-being. In America, financial health depends on good credit. HR 2332 allows victims to put the past behind them and seek a much-needed fresh start. It is an excellent complement to the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in supporting justice for survivors.

We look forward to working toward passage of this act as well as continued efforts on behalf of trafficking survivors.

REVEREND DR. MARIAN HATCHER LETTER OF
SUPPORT: H.R. 2332

Survivors need a great deal of time trying to heal in ways you would expect; physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

However, another critically important aspect of healing is often left unattended and impedes the path to holistic health. That aspect is financial healing.

In many cases, the lack of financial wellness causes victims to have no option but to return to exploitive situations.

In other circumstances, survivors may be held civilly or criminally liable for debt incurred during their trafficking.

Any of these scenarios prevent the life of liberty and wholeness that survivors yearn for and deserve.

The Debt Bondage Repair Act will help provide survivors with a viable chance at full wellbeing, inclusive of financial stability and security.

I strongly support this critical legislation and urge Congress to support trafficking survivors by passing the Debt Bondage Repair Act.

REV. DR. MARIAN HATCHER.

CONSUMER DATA INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, June 14, 2021.

Hon. MAXINE WATERS,
Chairwoman,
Hon. PATRICK T. MCHENRY,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Financial Services,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRWOMAN WATERS AND RANKING MEMBER MCHENRY: I write on behalf of the Consumer Data Industry Association in support of H.R. 2332, the Debt Bondage Repair Act. This bill will give victims of human trafficking and debt bondage the ability to prove that they were victims of human trafficking and financial abuse so they can remove that information from their financial history.

This bill will help to address the financial trauma victims of human trafficking often endure. These victims should not have to bear the burden of fraudulent debts and ruined credit from their exploitation as they begin to rebuild their lives. Any verified fraudulent data on a credit report should be removed promptly from credit reports. In fact, the current practice credit bureaus follow is to remove any verified fraudulent data from reports. This bill will be helpful as it will specifically acknowledge in the law that these kinds of abuses occur and that the resulting tradelines should be deleted from reports.

Thank you for your work on this legislation.

Sincerely,

FRANCIS CREIGHTON,
President & CEO.

Mr. MCHEMRY. Additionally, I would like to thank Polaris for their support of this legislation.

This is a great example of what happens when both parties work together. I want to thank Chairwoman WATERS for her help and assistance, and her staff, the Financial Services Committee majority Democrat staff, for their help with my staff and the Republican minority staff on the House Financial Services Committee.

We have a bipartisan solution to help trafficking victims pick up the pieces and begin a new life. I urge my colleagues to support this bill. I think this will be helpful to the lives at stake and let them rebuild their lives, not just financially but rebuild their lives.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared to close. I reserve the balance of my time until Mr. MCHEMRY yields back.

Mr. MCHEMRY. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this good bipartisan bill that will help victims.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from North Carolina has yielded back.

The gentlewoman from California has the only time remaining.

Mr. MCHEMRY. Madam Speaker, I thought I reserved.

Madam Speaker, I urge adoption of this important measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Survivors of human trafficking face many obstacles to recovering from the

physical, emotional, and financial abuse inflicted by their traffickers. The Debt Bondage Repair Act makes strides in assisting them to restore their credit and achieve financial reintegration into their communities.

Congress can play a leading role in helping trafficking survivors to take back control. For that reason, I certainly urge both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this important bill.

I do want to take a moment to thank my ranking member, Mr. MCHEMRY, for the leadership that he has provided on trafficking in general and on financial trafficking specifically. This is important legislation, and I am so pleased to be able to work with him, and I am so pleased that this bill has bipartisan support. I want to thank him for the work that he has done and will continue to do.

I would also briefly note that survivors of trafficking are not the only individuals who are harmed by our broken credit reporting system. The system serves as a major barrier to economic opportunity for so many others. So we are going to continue working with Mr. MCHEMRY, and I have scheduled a full committee hearing on June 29 to further explore these credit reporting challenges. I believe that our Republican colleagues will join with us to advance bold solutions to make the system fair for all of our constituents.

Again, I am so pleased that the members of the committee have worked together. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2332, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2332, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mrs. BOEBERT. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

LGBTQ BUSINESS EQUAL CREDIT ENFORCEMENT AND INVESTMENT ACT

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1443) to amend the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to require the collection of small business loan data related to LGBTQ-owned businesses, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1443

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “LGBTQ Business Equal Credit Enforcement and Investment Act”.

SEC. 2. SMALL BUSINESS LOAN DATA COLLECTION.

Section 704B of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (15 U.S.C. 1691c-2) is amended—

(1) by inserting “LGBTQ-owned,” after “minority-owned,” each place such term appears;

(2) in subsection (e)(2)(G), by inserting “, sexual orientation, gender identity” after “sex”; and

(3) in subsection (h), by adding at the end the following:

“(7) LGBTQ-OWNED BUSINESS.—The term ‘LGBTQ-owned business’ means a business—

“(A) more than 50 percent of the ownership or control of which is held by 1 or more individuals self-identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer; and

“(B) more than 50 percent of the net profit or loss of which accrues to 1 or more individuals self-identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer.”.

SEC. 3. DETERMINATION OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS.

The budgetary effects of this Act, for the purpose of complying with the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010, shall be determined by reference to the latest statement titled “Budgetary Effects of PAYGO Legislation” for this Act, submitted for printing in the Congressional Record by the Chairman of the House Budget Committee, provided that such statement has been submitted prior to the vote on passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHEMRY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material thereon.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from New York, Representative TORRES, for his leadership on H.R. 1443, the LGBTQ Business Equal Credit Enforcement and Investment Act.

We know transparency is critical in helping identify discriminatory lending practices in the financial marketplace. This bill would enhance a provision of Dodd-Frank requiring data collection on lending to small and minority-owned businesses to include data on lending to LGBTQ-owned businesses as well, including self-reported gender identity and sexual orientation.

This bill will also define an LGBTQ-owned business in the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the ECOA, which would allow more businesses to gain access to capital and investment.

Of course, June is Pride Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the